

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SP-02 FEA-01 ACDA-07 CIAE-00
INR-07 IO-13 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 EB-07 NRC-05
OES-07 DODE-00 ERDA-05 SS-15 PM-04 H-01 PA-01
PRS-01 USIA-06 /113 W
-----090216Z 118636 /66

R 081132Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2151
INFO AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 5909

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, MNUC, PK, FR
SUBJECT: NUCLEAR REPROCESSING PLANT ISSUE

REF: ISLAMABAD 5795

1. RETIRED AIR MARSHAL ASGHAR KHAN-TEHRIQ-I-ISTIQLAL
PRESIDENT AND PROMINENT OPPOSITION LEADER-HAS TWICE
MORE ADDRESSED THE QUESTION OF THE PAKISTAN NATIONAL
ALLIANCE'S POSITION ON THE REPROCESSING PLANT AND REFUTED
PPP CRITICISM THAT THE OPPOSITION IS AGAINST THE PURCHASE
OF THE PLANT. ACCORDING TO THE INDEPENDENT URDU DAILY,
"NAWA-I-WAQT" ON JUNE 6, ASGHAR KAHN, WHILE ADDRESSING
FEMALE PARTY WORKERS IN RAWALPINDI, SAID THAT HE BELIEVED
NUCLEAR POWER SHOULD BE USED FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES IN
PAKISTAN. HE ADDED THAT "WE" (PNA) WILL PERSUADE "THEM"
(USA) OF OUR PEACFUL INTENTIONS AND THEN WE WILL DEFINITELY
INSTALL THE REPORCESSING PLANT.

2. THE AIR MARSHAL THEN DREW A TORTURED PARALLEL BETWEEN
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THE USG'S ATTITUDES TOWARDS PAKISTAN'S AND INDIA'S NUCLEAR
PROGRAMS BY NOTING THAT AFTER INDIRA GANDHI'S DEPARTURE
INDIA RECEIVED PERMISSION TO SET UP A NUCLEAR ENERGY
PROGRAM AT TARAPUR (SIC). WE ASSUME ASGHAR WAS ELABORATING
HIS PREVIOUSLY STATED POSITION THAT THE REASON THE US IS
OPPOSED TO THE REPROCESSING PLANT SALE IS BECAUSE OF ITS
DISTRUST OF BHUTTO'S MOTIVES, IMPLYING THAT IF BHUTTO

GOES THEN THE US WILL HAVE NO OBJECTION TO PAKISTAN'S ACQUISITION OF THE PLANT. HE CLOSED HIS DISCUSSION OF THIS SUBJECT BY REITERATING THAT HE HAD NEVER GIVEN ANY STATEMENT AGAINST PAKISTAN ACQUIRING THE REPROCESSING PLANT. THE JUNE 8 ISSUE OF "NAWA-I-WAQT" REPORTED THAT AT HIS JUNE 7 PRESS CONFERENCE, HIS SECOND SINCE RELEASE FROM DENTON, THE AIR MARSHAL BRIEFLY TOUCHED ON THE REPROCESSING PLANT ISSUE BY NOTING THE REASON FOR PAKISTAN'S TROUBLE IN ACQUIRING THE PLANT IS THAT OTHER GOVERNMENTS, ESPECIALLY THE US AND FRANCE, "DON'T TRUST US" (READ BUTTO).

3. WHILE THE REPROCESSING PLANT PURCHASE WAS NOT A CAMPAIGN ISSUE DURING THE LAST GENERAL ELECTIONS, THE RECENT SPATE OF STATEMENTS BY ASGHAR KHAN, PRECIPITATED BY PPP-INSPIRED CRITICISM, IS AN INDICATION THE PLANT COULD PLAY A MORE IMPORTANT ROLE IF NEW ELECTIONS ARE HELD. WE MAY THEREFORE WITNESS BHUTTO CLAIMING HE IS PROTECTING NATIONAL HONOR AND PRIDE BY INSISTING ON THE PLANT PURCHASE WHILE THE PNA CONTENDS THE ONLY IMPEDIMENT TO THE PURCHASE IS US AND FRENCH MISTRUST OF THE PM. CONSTABLE

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Message Attributes

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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 08-Jun-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Executive Order: GS
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